

British Bechuanaland

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Now here is a stamp issuing entity that does not come up very often in any discussion of perfins excepting, maybe, "there aren't any known from there!" Well, maybe and maybe not....

For most of us it might be important to know a little history of the area using the name "British Bechuanaland" that should not be confused with "Bechuanaland Protectorate". British Bechuanaland was a British Crown Colony in the south of Africa. It was annexed to the Cape of Good Hope Colony in 1895, thus becoming part of the Union of South Africa. Stamps were issued for this Crown Colony from 1886 to 1897.

Due north of British Bechuanaland, east of German South West Africa and west of Southern Rhodesia was the Bechuanaland Protectorate. This "Bechuanaland" remains intact today. However, since its independence in 1966, it became the Republic of Botswana.

Pictured is a British Bechuanaland Scott #10 which has a black overprint on a Great Britain #111 issued in 1887. The *World Perfins Catalog - Africa* by Bob Schwerdt (#150-L) does not show any listings for British Bechuanaland. However, two other patterns are shown for



Bechuanaland Protectorate with notes that these are probable fakes. There is no further detail given. Likewise, this "S" pattern appears neither with the Cape of Good Hope nor the South Africa patterns in the same catalog.

The British "Tomkins Perfin Catalog" lists this pattern in a Great Britain stamp as **S0010.37**. The catalog lists the city of use as Darlington and the period of use c.1890-1895. So, could there be a company tie? ...a favor of some sort? ...a stamp meant for use in British Bechuanaland but somehow used in Great Britain? ...a fake overprint? ...a new pattern from a new stamp issuing entity? ...gold or fool's gold?

I conferred with our members Bob Schwerdt and Alan Sandy (LM#2539) on this item. Unfortunately, there is no discernable cancel to help. Alan pointed out that Zululand perfins are known with cancels in unlikely places like Liverpool! Alan perused a resource he has - Robson Lowe's *The Empire in Africa*. Alan remarked that at least the perfin is in the one and only correct QV Jubilee listed as overprinted! It could be good, real good, but maybe not!

Here is where we now turn to you our members for any additional light that you might be able to shine on this dilemma. HELP!